



ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



No. 16 Fourth Quarter 2007

NJIAHC Salutes the Italian Consuls

The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission extends its appreciation for the support and efforts of Italy's consular representatives in the state.

New Jersey is currently split geographically between the New York Consulate/Newark Vice Consulate and the Philadelphia Consulate. Residents of the NJ counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Ocean, Salem and Somerset are served by the Consulate in Philadelphia. The remaining counties are under the jurisdiction of the Consulate General in New York for visas and for all other matters are served by the Vice Consulate in Newark.

The Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia, the Hon. Stefano Mistretta, was appointed to his post in 2004 after many years of distinguished diplomatic service. A graduate of the University of Florence, he began his professional life in the private sector and in 1981 received an appointment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome. The Hon. Mistretta is a fervent supporter of the promotion of the Italian language and culture and is a familiar face at the many events throughout the state involving the Italian American community.

Upon completion of the Hon. Antonio Bandini's term this past summer, we were delighted to welcome his successor, the Hon. Francesco Maria Taló, as the Consul

General of New York.

Serving as Vice Consul of Italy in Newark since 2004 is Paolo Toschi, whose term is coming to an end. Most New Jersey residents involved in the Italian American community are well-acquainted with Paolo, who was an active and enthusiastic participant in events of all kinds. Paolo is a graduate of the University of Strasburg, France, and the Law School of the University of Ferrara. We bid a sad farewell to Paolo but wish him well in his new position in Brussels.

The NJIAHC is proud that two of its Commissioners are involved in consular work. Dr. Gilda Rorro Baldassari serves as Honorary Vice Consul and Mario Marano as Consular Correspondent, both reporting to the Hon. Stefano Mistretta.

In order to become an Honorary Vice Consul, you must be active in and knowledgeable about the Italian community and the Italian language. The Consul General proposes the person to the Foreign Ministry in Rome and upon approval, issues an appointment decree.

The duties of an Honorary Vice Consul are numerous and revolve around assisting the Italian community, both resident and



*Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia,
the Hon. Stefano Mistretta.*

transient. These include helping people with completing their registration as Italian citizens, finding vital statistics documents, obtaining or renewing passports, verifying translations, navigating Italian election procedures, and authenticating signatures.

The Honorary Vice Consuls are also directed to work towards the preservation and promotion of the Italian language, culture and heritage in schools and local communities. Towards this purpose and also to further economic and commercial ties with Italy, they are authorized to work with local governments in New Jersey. ■



▲ *Consular Correspondent
Mario A. Marano in his
favorite tie.*



▲ *Honorary Vice Consul Dr. Gilda Rorro-Baldassari
with the Gruppo Folkloristico "Coro Lilybetano" from
Marsala, Sicily.*



▲ *Vice Consul of Italy in Newark Paolo Toschi (l.)
with the Italian Ambassador to the US, the Hon.
Giovanni Castellaneta.*



Chairman's Message



Cav. Richard Bilotti

As we look forward to a productive and fulfilling 2008, we reflect on this year and are pleased with what we've achieved through the efforts of so many. Among the events we take pride in are:

- Convocation of Italian American organizations held at Burlington County College.
- The Higher Education Committee's symposium at Rutgers University.
- Sponsorship of Rutgers Italian Hours.
- Teacher training and roll-out of the Universality of Italian Heritage curriculum.
- Our 4th annual Congress of Italian American organizations at Rutgers.
- Reception in honor of Chief Justice James R. Zazzali (ret.).

- Sponsorship of scholarships for students to attend the Università per Stranieri in Siena, Italy.

One of our principal goals for 2008 is the development of a rich and dynamic website that will be *the* place for Italian Americans in New Jersey to visit for information on the past, present and future of our shared heritage. We have already made the first few steps towards realizing this dream: the outline of the site is underway and the URL has been secured. Appropriately named www.italianlifenj.org, the site will continue to be upgraded throughout the year. We invite you to visit it periodically so that you can witness the progress we make.

Thank you for your support – I look forward to continued success in 2008.

Cav. Richard Bilotti
Chairman, NJIAHC

NJ Italians in the Arts Brings Audience to Its Feet

Spontaneous standing ovations for all three keynote speakers, a surprise visit by the Consul General of Italy in NY, an impromptu concert during lunch—by all standards the Fourth Annual Congress of Italian American Organizations, entitled NJ Italians in the Arts, was a resounding success. An enthusiastic audience of more than 300 people filled the Rutgers Student Center in New Brunswick on Saturday, October 27th, and was treated to three outstanding and moving presentations by accomplished and renowned artists in their respective fields of endeavor: architecture, poetry and music. Emceed by News 12 NJ anchor Janine Strafaci, the Congress proudly presented Anthony Visco, ecclesiastical painter sculptor, on “The Italian American

Art of Devotion;” Maria Mazziotti Gillan, Founder and Executive Director of the Poetry Center at Passaic County Community College, on “Reclaiming our Heritage: An Italian American Writer Speaks;” and Maestro Fernando Raucci, Music Director and Conductor of the Greater Princeton Youth Orchestra, on “A Journey through the History of Neapolitan Songs.” ■

Attending the Congress was an enthusiastic and exuberant group of Italian Club students from Raritan HS with their Italian teacher Jennifer Rubino (center). Flanked by Chairman Emeritus Cav. N. Larry Paragano and Commissioner Barbara Lazzaro. ►



Upcoming Commission Events

- **Wednesday, February 13, 2008**
Beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Supreme Court Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr. shares his “Reflections on Growing Up As An Italian-American in New Jersey”

College Avenue Student Center,
Multipurpose Room - Rutgers
University, New Brunswick

- **Friday, March 14, 2008**
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m
Showcase Italian II: Teaching the Unknown Classics in Italian and Italian American Studies
College Avenue Student Center
Rutgers University, New Brunswick
Contact 732.932.0670 ext. 13 or mwells@iahi.rutgers.edu

- **Wednesday, March 19, 2008**
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.
Meeting of the NJIAHC
NJ State House, Trenton, Room 209
Open to the public

- **Saturday, April 5, 2008**
6:30 - Midnight
Inaugural Ball honoring NJ Cavalieri

Hilton Hotel, East Brunswick
Contact David Iommarini at
iommarinid@aol.com

- **Saturday, May 5, 2008**
Regional Convocation – Newark/Essex
County Area
Newark's Little Italy

Contact 732.932.0670, ext. 13 or
mwells@iahi.rutgers.edu



Honoring Chief Justice Hon. James R. Zazzali (retired)

The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation honored Chief Justice Hon. James R. Zazzali (retired), seventh chief justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, at a reception on October 13, 2007, at The Governor's Mansion, Drumthwacket, in Princeton.

Born in Newark and educated at Seton Hall Preparatory School, Zazzali was graduated from Georgetown College and

Georgetown Law Center. He held numerous judicial positions through his career and had been engaged in the practice of law in Newark and Trenton in the firm founded by his late father and his brother, Zazzali, Fagella & Nowak.

The NJ Italian American Heritage Foundation proudly saluted Chief Justice Zazzali for honoring his state and his heritage. ■



▲ Chief Justice Zazzali (ret.) with his wife Eileen and children Kevin, Jim Jr., Courtney and Mara.



▲ Chief Justice Zazzali (ret.) with the Vice President of the NJ Italian American Heritage Foundation, Tom Pecora, and his family (from l.): wife Angelina, mother-in-law Amalia Parise, and children Tom Jr., Michele, and Michael.



▲ Former Governor Brendan Byrne with NJIAHC Chairman Emeritus Cav. N. Larry Paragano and current NJIAHC Chairman Cav. Richard Bilotti (r.) with his wife Katherine.



◀ NJ Italian American Heritage Foundation Director of Development David Iommarini with wife Barbara and daughter Lisa (standing) with Richard Steinhouse, emcee Valerie Smaldone and Joan Iommarini.

President of NJEA Joyce Powell with NJEA Executive Director Vince Giordano. ►





Honoring Chief Justice Hon. James R. Zazzali (retired)



◀ Cav. N. Larry Paragano with Loretta Zuppa.



▲ Walter & Judy Ricciardi.

Cav. Uff. Laura Sanguineti White with her husband Roscoe and Dr. Robert Freda, Executive Director of the Coccia Institute. ▶



▲ NJIAHC Executive Director Dr. Mary Ann Re with NJ Italian American Heritage Foundation Vice President Tom Pecora.



◀ Angelo Genova, Cav. Paul DiGaetano and friends.



▲ Frank Zuppa with friends.



◀ John Scarpato, Carl Carabelli, and Lee Esposito.



▼ Sal Davino (l.) and friends.



Curriculum "Roll-Out" Session for NJ DOE Administration

An important session, designed specifically for NJ Superintendents, Principals and Curriculum Specialists, was held at the Rutgers Student Center on Wednesday, September 26th. This "Curriculum Implementation Roll-Out" focused on the pragmatic issues associated with integrating our unique Universality of Italian Heritage Curriculum into school districts across the state.



▲ Dr. John Dougherty, Coordinator of Social Studies for the NJ Dept of Education with Dr. Sandra Alberti, Dir. Office of Academic Standards, NJ Dept of Education.

of Education; Dr. Ray Yannuzzi, President of Camden County College, and Frederick Cappello, Dean of School and Community Academic Programs at Camden County College, who have volunteered to support the Commission in its mission to deploy the curriculum as broadly as possible throughout NJ. Administrators also had the opportunity to hear from the Hon. Stefano Mistretta, Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia. Rounding out the morning's program was a 'case study' of implementation strategies in the Clark School District, offered by Curriculum and Instruction Director Vincent Caputo, and a stimulating Question and Answer panel. ■

The Consulates and the Commission

A Perfect Partnership

Dr. Mary Ann Re
Exec. Dir. NJIAHC



With the enthusiastic support of our stateside representatives of the Italian government, we have collaborated on a wide range of initiatives that further the achievement of our shared objectives as formalized in our Commission's Mission Statement: To build and strengthen the cultural identity of Italians and Italian Americans.

From the identification of heritage-based organizations, to the celebration of Italian and Italian American milestones, to the promotion of study-abroad, exchange and internship programs, to the all important promotion of the study of the Italian language in collaboration with ITANJ, we have worked with the same objectives as our guide.

Consul General of Italy in Philadelphia, the Hon. Stefano Mistretta, has consistently demonstrated his support of our Universality of Italian Heritage Curriculum, providing insightful remarks during our "Teach the Teacher" training at DOE Headquarters in January, and our roll-out session with Superintendents and Curriculum Specialists in September.

Dott. Alfio Russo, Director of Education at the NY Consulate, another strong advocate of our curriculum, is our liaison with the Italian government-funded IACE (Italian American Committee on Education). IACE has agreed to contribute important resources towards the funding of a set of lesson plans currently under development entitled "Italy in the 20th and 21st Centuries," the latest addition to our Universality of Italian Heritage Curriculum.

And in his short tenure as the Consul General of Italy in New York, Hon. Francesco Maria Talo' has graciously and enthusiastically participated in numerous community events throughout the state, most recently at our Congress on NJ Italians in the Arts.

In closing, please indulge me a personal note, as I offer a heartfelt thank you to our Vice Consul of Italy in Newark, Paolo Toschi, whose tenure is drawing to a close. He has been ever supportive of the initiatives of the Commission and we will miss him! ■

Support Your Heritage!

The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation works to promote a bias-free, positive image of Italian and Italian American people.

The New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, which is supported by the Foundation, developed a curriculum that is currently available for schools throughout the state of New Jersey. Through education we promote activities and programs that build and strengthen the cultural identity of people of Italian descent. We rely on contributions from our Italian American friends to help us spread the word about our rich culture, heritage and language. Won't you join with us?

Your gift of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more will help us to provide programs and services necessary to accomplish our mission. Of course a gift of any amount is always appreciated.

To make a contribution, please complete the form and return it with your check to:
The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation, 18 Bishop Place, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.
For further information please contact David Iommarini at 732-932-2131.



☐ Yes, I am proud of my heritage and wish to support it!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Daytime Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____



THE NEW JERSEY

ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



Paragano Honored



◀ Cav. Paul DiGaetano, former Assembly Majority Leader and Special Advisor to the NJIAHC, presented NJIAHC Chairman Emeritus Cav. N. Larry Paragano with a Joint Resolution from the New Jersey Legislature, in appreciation of his many years of dedicated service to the Commission.

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The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey.